THE HALCYON

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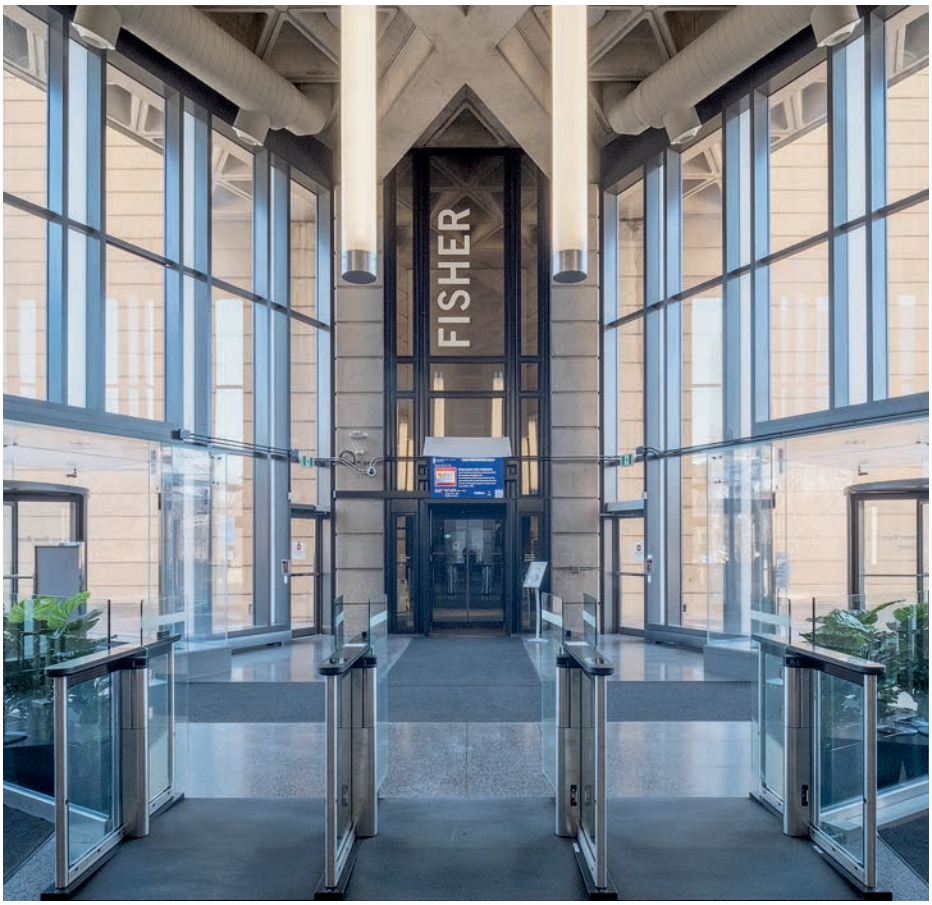
Welcome to the Summer Issue of *The Halcyon*!

As the days lengthen and the campus transitions to its summer tempo, we are delighted to bring you the latest highlights from the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library. In keeping with tradition, our June issue features an overview of key acquisitions from the past fiscal year spanning diverse subjects, time periods, languages, and formats. Our colleagues in Rare Books and Special Collections highlight notable additions within their respective areas of expertise, offering valuable insights into the continued expansion and richness of our holdings.

As the 2024–2025 academic year draws to a close, David Fernández reflects on the enduring impact of the library's public programming. In addition, I am pleased to share several noteworthy updates from the Fisher.

First, we are proud to announce that *Women on the Move: An Exhibition of Travel Books* has been awarded third place in the 'Pictorial' category at the 2024 Alcuin Society Awards for Excellence in Book Design in Canada. Congratulations to David Fernández, Ksenya Kiebuzinski, Tim Perry, Elizabeth Ridolfo, and David Moratto on this well-deserved recognition.

We are also thrilled to welcome Lale Javanshir to Rare Books and Special Collections. Lale joined us on 1 March as our new Middle Eastern Studies Librarian, bringing exceptional expertise and energy to this important role. We look forward to the many ways she will help activate and interpret our growing Middle Eastern collections. Please see her first contribution to *The Halcyon* on page six.



In another exciting development, Rare Books and Special Collections has been awarded a Movable Cultural Property Grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage to help us acquire a manuscript copy book containing orders issued by General James Wolfe during the 1759 Quebec Campaign. Recognized as a work of 'outstanding significance' and 'national importance,' this manuscript now has a permanent home at the Fisher. It is a valuable and fitting addition to our extensive holdings related to General Wolfe.

We are deeply grateful to our donors, past and present, whose generosity continues to sustain acquisitions that enrich research, support teaching, and inspire academic curiosity. In addition to the core acquisitions fund for Rare Books and Special Collections and the Central Library's Collections Development budget, a number of endowments and special purpose funds have been instrumental in the growth and stewardship of our collections. These funds provide dedicated support for areas such as Canadian history, social history, philosophy, book history, bibliography, and the history of medicine.

It's been a remarkable 2024–2025, and we look forward to continuing to share these stories of discovery, growth, and scholarly engagement with you.

Warm wishes for a wonderful summer!

Loryl MacDonald
Associate Chief Librarian for
Special Collections and Director,
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

COVER IMAGE: Illustration from *Пятілетка* (1930). Article on page 12.

A Sublime *Terror*: The Tattoo Bindings of Aarom von Hemmersbach

The Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library is now the first Canadian institution to hold the work of Aarom von Hemmersbach, a Winnipeg-based artist whose innovative tattoo book bindings have quickly become prized by collectors. Two of Aarom's works have joined the library's significant collections of fine bindings, from the Birdsall Collection to the breathtaking designer bindings of Robert Wu and Michael Wilcox.

The first volume to arrive was a rebinding of the first translation of *Frankenstein* into Spanish by Luis Costarias, which was published by Biblioteca de la Nación in Buenos Aires in 1912. The second is a special clamshell case titled 'The Arctic Binding' commissioned for the library by Friend of Fisher Steering Committee member Mark Andrews, who is a keen admirer and collector of Aarom's work. Mark wanted to see Aarom represented among the collections at the Fisher and hit upon the idea that he produce a special binding for us. Fisher Library Director Loryl MacDonald suggested working with Canadiana as inspiration, to match Aarom's Canadian roots.

I met Aarom and Mark in April 2024 and brought out a variety of candidates. Among them were two manuscript volumes by Arctic traveller Owen Stanley (1811–1850), a journal and celebrated series of watercolour and ink drawings, which Aarom immediately gravitated towards for Stanley's dramatic images of ships encased in ice. While both items were purchased by the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections from Marlborough Rare Books in 1971, they sat apart on the shelves in inconspicuous boxes until finally being reunited inside the beautiful clamshell designed and illustrated by Aarom and constructed by bookbinder Keith Felton. Aarom's choice of Owen Stanley's manuscripts was significant, as the watercolours will be featured in the upcoming *Arctic Fever* exhibition in January 2026. The manuscripts are considered a gem of the Fisher Library's collections documenting the history of Arctic travel.

Owen Stanley served aboard the *H.M.S. Terror* during an expedition led by Sir George Back in 1836–1837 to trace the outline of the Arctic coast from the Melville Peninsula towards Point Turnagain on Kiillinnguyaq (Kent Peninsula) to map a nagging gap in the hoped-for Northwest Passage. Back and John Franklin had reached Point Turnagain overland in 1821, but the outline of the coast westward towards the Melville Peninsula remained unknown. Stanley's role on this new expedition was to collect astronomical and magnetic observations, which he dutifully recorded in his journal alongside several accomplished ink drawings and a separate series of watercolours. In August 1836, the ship became trapped in ice in Frozen Strait and the expedition had to return to England in the spring, having achieved little. But the *H.M.S. Terror* lives on in infamy as one of the ships lost with all hands during John Franklin's disastrous 1845 expedition.

Aarom's illustration for the Stanley manuscripts takes direct inspiration from the source material, showing the *Terror* stuck in ice, complete with its canvas covering to provide warmth on deck. On

IMAGE, OPENING PAGE: Aarom von Hemmersbach's binding of *El moderno prometeo* (Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, translated by Luis Costarias, Buenos Aires: Biblioteca de la Nación, 1912). **BELOW:** The Arctic Binding: a tattooed clamshell case for Owen Stanley's manuscripts at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library by Aarom von Hemmersbach. **FACING PAGE:** Watercolour by Owen Stanley depicting the *H.M.S. Terror* locked in ice, dated 22 February 1837.

the verso of the case, two walruses look on in seeming bemusement. As Aarom writes in his accompanying artist's statement, 'The northern elements have reduced the exploration vessel to a skeleton on the landscape,' while 'a robust walrus is juxtaposed with the Arctic tragedy on the front cover. The powerful animal is perfectly at home in this climate, relaxed and thriving.' The scene of horror succinctly demonstrates how many colonial Arctic travellers failed to adapt their habits and technologies to the climate, creating prisons of their own making.[1] Later, travellers such as John Rae, Robert Peary, and Roald Amundsen would have greater success by learning survival skills from Inuit knowledge keepers.

Aarom's bindings are a combination of two passions: tattooing and book collecting. Growing up in Warren, Manitoba, he came to Winnipeg for university before falling into the world of tattooing via drumming in a punk band. The band regularly played gigs at the Royal Albert Hotel and would drop by the tattoo shop next door. After years of apprenticeships and learning at the feet of admired artists like Kurt Wiscombe, he was able to open his own shop in 2007. While honing his craft, he moved into a big old house with a library room full of empty bookshelves. Thinking he'd buy a pile of old books by the pound to fill them, Aarom stopped by celebrated antiquarian book dealer Michael Park's Greenfield Books in Winnipeg. Michael must have seen something in him, because instead of casting him out, he took the time to tour Aarom through some special items in the shop, including a copy of Pierre Muret's *Rites of Funeral Ancient and Modern* (1683). As Aarom told me, 'I remember thinking, how am I holding something four hundred years old? How can I just bring that home? I ended up buying that book.' While he had collected books on tattooing previously, Aarom soon hit upon books issued by the Aldine Press as a favourite collecting area, spurred by an encounter with a copy of the famous *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499) at the University of Manitoba Libraries. Its beautiful allegoric imagery and mysterious origins 'struck a chord,' Aarom said. 'The more I learned about Aldus and the incredible hardships and hard work he had to do every day to create something and to share his knowledge with the world instead of keeping it hidden, that appealed to my punk sensibilities—knowledge is power and wanting to share with others instead of an elite few.'

At a dinner in Italy in 2015, a friend asked if he'd ever thought about tattooing a pigskin binding. The possibility intrigued him, but the technical problems created a challenge. As Aarom explained, leather is

'not very forgiving like human skin': it's the difference between living and dead tissue. Human skin absorbs tattoo ink at the subdermal layer, and can hold onto it, whereas leather lacks this capacity. Leather is also a highly porous material and sensitive to being stained. Initial efforts involved the ink just smearing everywhere. After hundreds of experiments and a lot of ruined leather, Aarom hit upon a special combination of techniques that involve a patented emulsion that helps the ink stay in place on the special calfskin leather he uses. The warm vellum-like tone of the leather and the pleasing textural quality of the tattooing on its surface gives his bindings a curiously antique, scrimshaw-like feeling. Combined with his unique illustrative style (especially a love of the gothic, as the *Frankenstein* binding demonstrates), the bindings have an uncanny quality that are very appropriate to rare books, feeling both of and apart from this time.

The *Frankenstein* binding held by the Fisher was commissioned by Toronto book dealer Karol Krysik, one of several dealers including Type Punch Matrix and Peter Harrington who have collaborated with Aarom on new bindings for significant editions whose original bindings were in serious disrepair. Aarom first exhibited his work at the 2016 New York Antiquarian Book Fair, where he found a receptive audience of collectors. Connections as a member of the Grolier Club have also led him to supporters such as Mark Andrews. All told, Aarom has completed about thirty bindings to date, with more projects on the go. But completing 'The Arctic Binding' felt personal. As Aarom explained, the feeling of hopelessness in the Arctic environment reminded him of growing up in the 'endless winter' in a small hamlet north of Winnipeg, but a brush with icy death only underscored the feeling. In his artist's statement, he recounts a dramatic incident of near-drowning at the age of twelve while taking a leaky boat onto a partially frozen lake with a friend. While George Back was able to pilot the *Terror* and its crew safely home in near-sinking condition (with Owen Stanley and his journal and drawings safely aboard), John Franklin's time on the ship had no such fortune eight years later. Like Stanley himself, we are lucky indeed that Aarom was rescued so that his and Stanley's creativity and artistry could be joined together in this beautiful work.

Grant Hurley
Canadiana Librarian
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

ENDNOTE

1 University of Toronto PhD candidate Nyssa Komorowski has contributed an essay that nicely ties together the topic of Arctic horror with Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and its Arctic frame narrative for the upcoming *Arctic Fever* exhibition catalogue; the two bindings by Aarom acquired for the Fisher Library are more connected than they seem on the surface. An essay by curator Mark A. Cheetham on the Stanley drawings will also be included in the same volume.

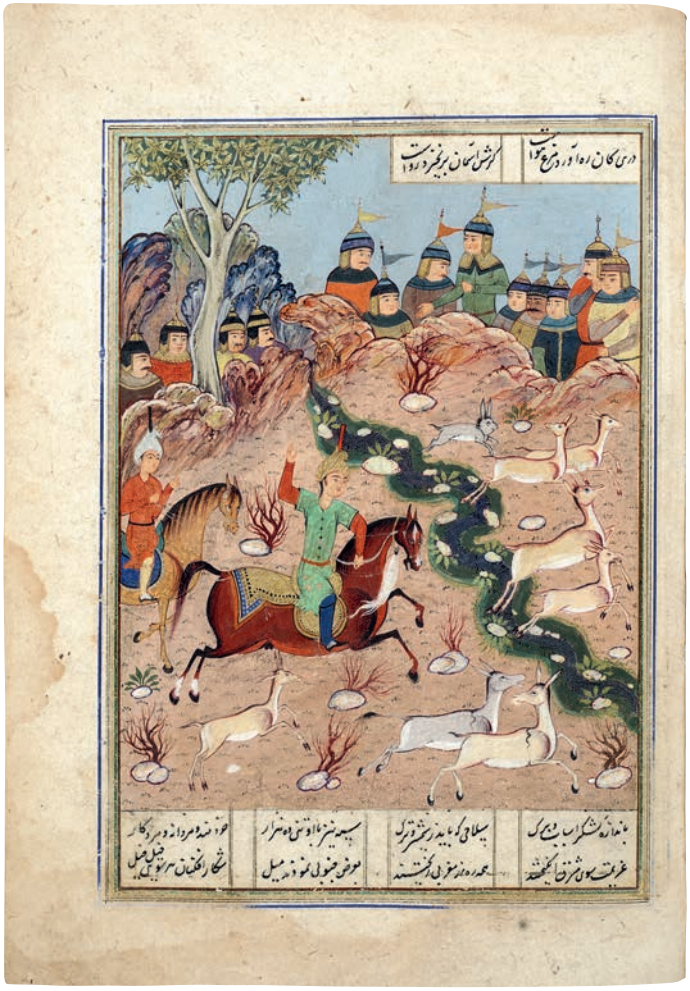
Poetic Journeys of Alexander the Great: New Additions to the Middle Eastern Collections

The Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library has recently added two significant works to its collections as part of its ongoing efforts to expand holdings in Middle Eastern languages and cultures. These new acquisitions—'Iqbāl-nāmeh' ('The Book of Fortune') by Nizami Ganjavi (c. 1141–1209) and 'İskender-nāmeh' ('The Book of Alexander') by Ahmedi (c. 1334–1413) in Ottoman Turkish—both exemplify the *maṣnavī* poetic form and centre on the legendary figure of Alexander the Great (356–323 BCE).

Ilyas ibn Yusuf Nizami Ganjavi was a renowned poet of Azerbaijani origin who spent his life in the city of Ganja and wrote exclusively in Persian. The newly acquired copy of 'Iqbāl-nāmeh' is a sixteenth-century manuscript, dated to the 970s Hijri (1562–1571), and features four exquisite full-page miniatures from the Qajar period (1789–1925). These illustrations depict philosophical debates between Alexander the Great and Indian sages, hunting scenes, and dramatic battles—including one involving supernatural beings such as demons or *djinn*.

'Iqbāl-nāmeh' is the second section of the Iskandar-nāmeh ('The Book of Alexander'), itself the fourth *masnavi* in Nizami's celebrated *Khamsa* (*Quintet*). The Iskandar-nāmeh comprises two parts: the Sharaf-nāmeh ('The Book of Honor') and the Iqbāl-nāmeh, composed in 1192 and 1197, respectively, and dedicated to Nusrat al-Din Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad ibn Ildegiz (d. 1210), the ruler of the Ildenizids—also known as the Atabegs of Azerbaijan—who ruled from 1191 to 1210. The Ildenizids were a Turkic Muslim dynasty that served as *atabegs* ('rulers') under the Seljuk Empire. While the Sharaf-nāmeh focuses on Alexander's conquests and travels, the Iqbāl-nāmeh elevates him as a philosopher-king who engages in intellectual debates with the greatest minds of the Greek and Indian traditions, including Socrates and Aristotle. Due to its frequent invocation of the concept of wisdom (*'aql*), the work has also been referred to as the Khirad-nāmeh ('Book of Wisdom').[1] Comprising 3,680 verses, 'Iqbāl-nāmeh' opens with a prayer to God and a eulogy of the Prophet Muhammad, followed by a dedication to the ruling monarch and Alp Arslan (1029–1072), the second sultan of the Seljuk Empire. It continues with an array of stories and legends, such as the tale of Archimedes and the Chinese maiden, the story of Mary the Copt, a

IMAGE, FACING PAGE: A section relating Alexander's ascension and philosophical debates, from 'İskender-nāmeh' manuscript (sixteenth century). **BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT:** Alexander the Great at an intellectual gathering, from the library's manuscript copy of 'Iqbāl-nāmeh,' dated to the 970s Hijri (1562–1571). Royal hunting scene, 'Iqbāl-nāmeh.'



Khorasani narrative, and the deception of the Caliph. Alexander the Great emerges not merely as a conqueror, but also as a questing intellectual in pursuit of wisdom and higher truths, encountering figures such as Dhu al-Qarnayn, a wise shepherd, and several learned sages.

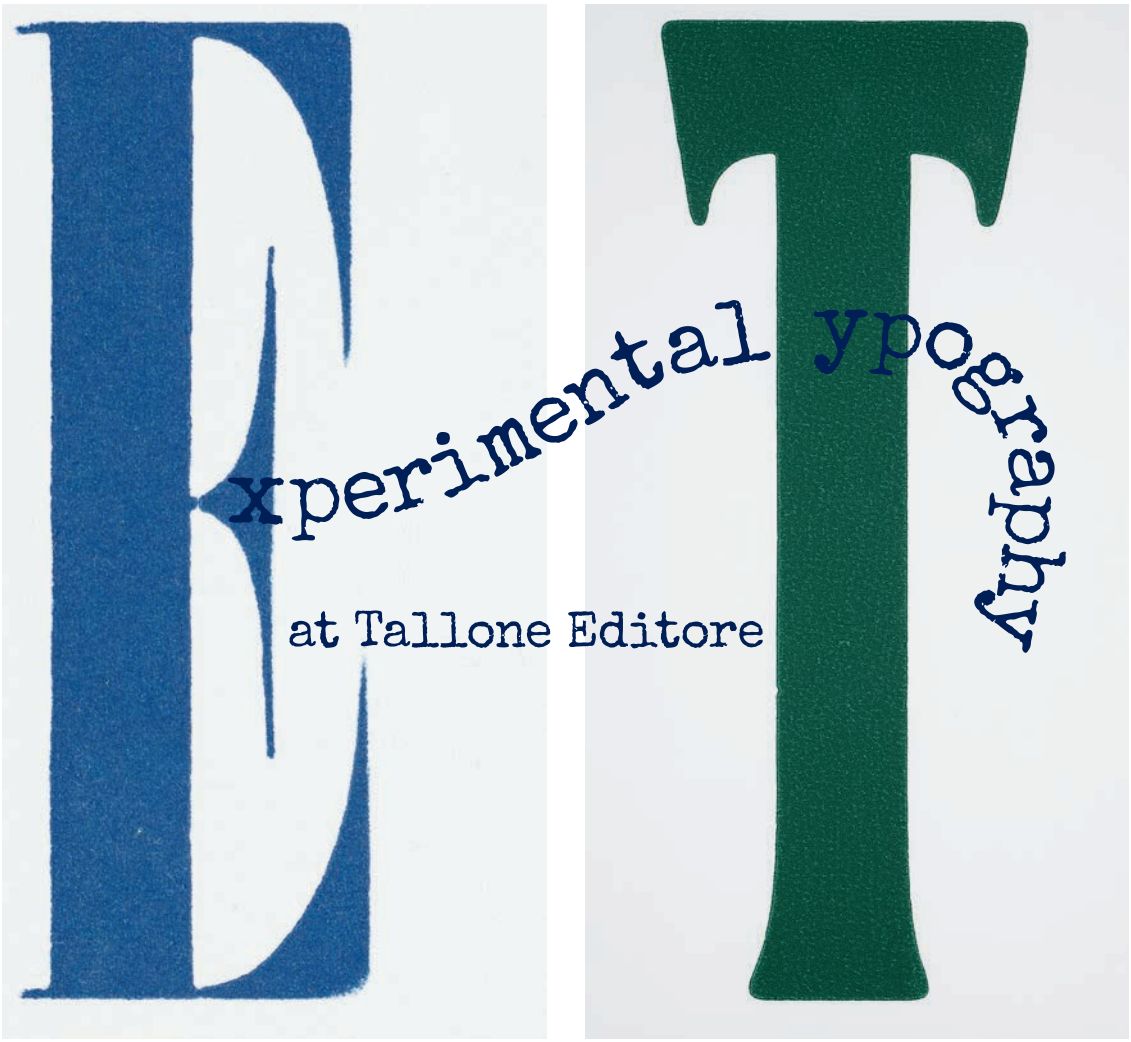
The second work, 'İskender-nāmeh,' is an Ottoman Turkish text dating to the sixteenth century. Unlike Iqbāl-nāmeh, this manuscript does not include any illustrations or illuminations, though it shares many thematic and structural parallels, particularly the central presence of Alexander the Great. The work opens with the well-known allegory of the candle and the moth (*sham' u parvānah*), which is a motif famously used by Rumi in his *Maṣnavī-i Ma'navī* and widely used by other poets. This is followed by a eulogy for God and a section on prophethood (*nubuwwat*), setting the tone for the spiritual and philosophical reflections that follow. 'İskender-nāmeh' weaves together spiritual, mystical, and epic narratives, embodying the Turkish *masnavi* tradition that bridges oral and written literature. The flexible structure of the *masnavi*, in which each verse line is metrically independent, allows poets to traverse a wide range of topics and delve into philosophical and spiritual themes without the constraints of stricter poetic forms. In this work, Alexander is once again portrayed as a wise and inquisitive king, one who seeks the company of scholars, initiates philosophical debates, and exemplifies intelligence. The narrative follows the arc of his life: from birth and rise to power, to his loves, battles, intellectual pursuits, and ultimately, his death.

The acquisition of these two remarkable texts not only enriches the Fisher Library's holdings in Middle Eastern literature, but also offers valuable insights into the enduring cultural and philosophical legacy of Alexander the Great across linguistic and literary traditions.

Lale Javanshir
Middle Eastern Studies Librarian
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

ENDNOTE

1 William L. Hanaway, "Eskandar-Nāma," *Encyclopædia Iranica*, vol. VIII, fasc. 6, pp. 609-612, published December 15, 1998; last modified April 29, 2013, https://iranicaonline.org/articles/eskandar-nama.

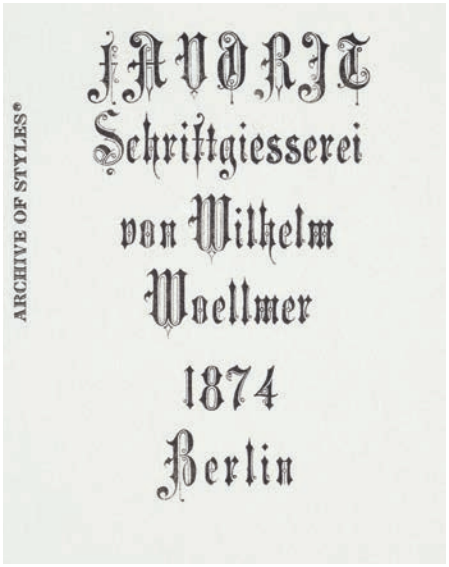


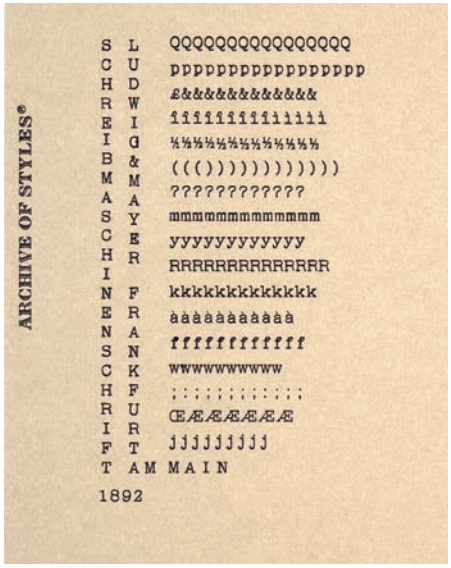
The Fisher Library has recently acquired several works from Tallone Editore that explore and experiment with original foundry types from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Tallone Editore is a printing studio that has its roots in the eighteenth century and was based in Châtenay-Malabry and Paris, France before moving to Alpignano, Italy, where it is now run by the Tallone Family. It has an impressive collection of type dating back to the seventeenth century, much of which is used in these works acquired by the library. Many of the foundry types represented in this collection fall under what is known as 'experimental typography,' where experimentation with forms, layouts, and composition create typefaces that can be used to evoke a particular feeling or emotion, or simply to catch attention, something particularly useful in advertising or in creating an enticing title page for a book.

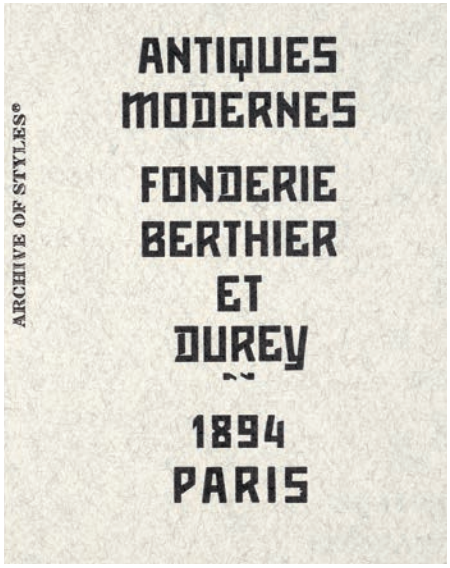
Archive of Styles: Wood, published in 2021–2022, is a collection of large Italian handcrafted wood type from between 1850 and 1950 (of which two samples are used in the title of this article). They were originally used in broadsides that were a distinctive feature of the urban landscape in Italy during this period and advertised performances, political rallies, films, and other events. Tallone Editore has beautifully printed specimens using these original pieces of type, which come both from famous producers and local craftsmen. The description at the front of the book reads 'in honor of these characters' multifaceted nature, each is printed with a different ink.' This leads to a work that is part typographic reference work and part artists' book. The different colours and letterforms preserve these examples of experimental typography and continue the tradition, as each letter presented seeks both to honour the type and to ignite the imagination of the beholder in picturing the original broadsides these types would have been printed with.

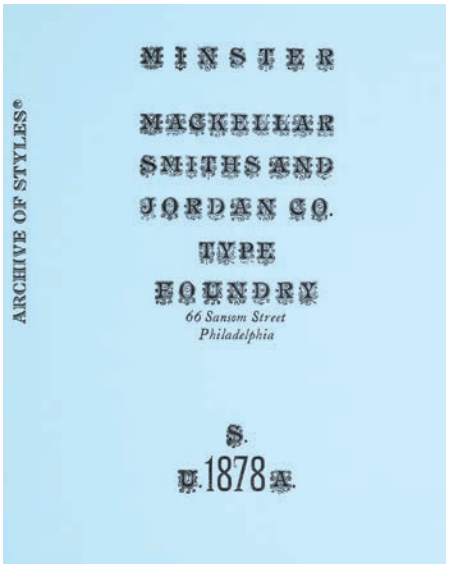
Archives of Styles: 1800 (2021?–2023) and *Archives of Styles* (2021?–2023), also published by Tallone Editore, consist of a collection of printed specimens using types that represent the height of nineteenth- and twentieth-century aesthetics respectively. These types were used in printing advertisements, for titles in books, and in large broadsides. Consisting of six volumes, each containing approximately fifty specimen cards, these

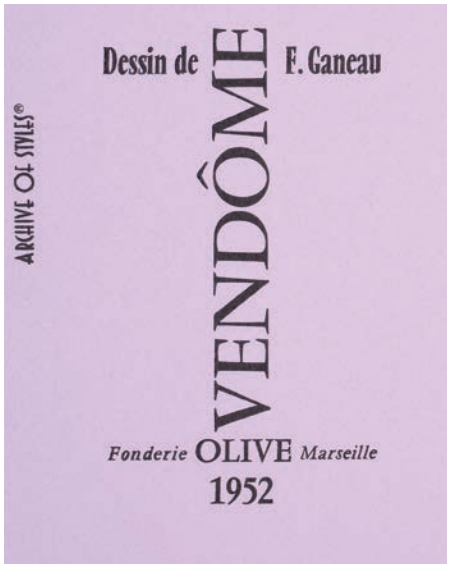
IMAGES, ABOVE AND FACING PAGE: Examples of type specimens from specimen card collections *Archive of Styles, Archive of Styles: Wood,* and *Archive of Styles: 1800* (Alpignano: Alberto Tallone Editore, 2021?–2023).









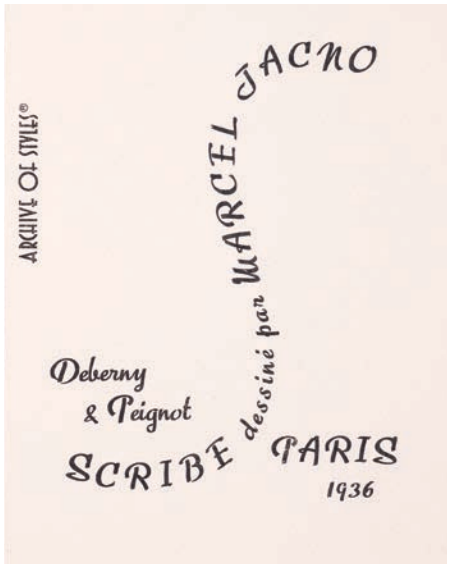


titles are typeset by hand and printed using a Phoenix V platen press, previously owned by Maurice Darantière (1882–1962), who used it to print the first edition of James Joyce's *Ulysses* in 1922. Each specimen includes a brief description of the type, including where and when it was created, forming a valuable reference source to identify these typefaces.

Finally, the library has acquired an edition of *La Commedia di Dante: Secondi l'Antica Vulgata* published in 2000 and issued on the seven-hundredth anniversary of the *Divina Commedia*. This volume was entirely typeset by hand in ten-point Garamond type, which was cut by Henri Parmentier in 1914. Tallone Editore estimates that 600,000 pieces of type were used in this set, and accounting for resetting with the same type, that individual pieces of type were handled over 1,200,000 times in the creation of this work. It is printed on Amatruda cotton paper made in Amalfi and consists of three volumes in a custom-made blue paper case.

These works join the Fisher's extensive collections on the history of printing and typography, acting as valuable reference works with which to explore the history and variety of type from this period, and also standing as beautiful works of art in their own right.

Andrew Stewart
Reading Room Coordinator
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library



Signs by Hand: An Illustrated Manuscript of Manual Alphabets

A newly purchased manuscript at the Fisher Library sits at an interesting point in the documentary history of deaf education. Manual language relying on hand gestures for nonverbal communication undoubtedly existed long before its early descriptions by Socrates, Saint Augustine, Saint Jerome, and others. Philosophical, religious, legal, and medical discussions of deafness dominate early sources on the subject, while illustrations of the shape or development of the signed languages used by individuals are scarcer. Early manuscripts such as the eleventh-/twelfth-century composite manuscript Cotton MS Tiberius A III at the British Library and the thirteenth-century manuscript ALC. 426 at the Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal show a monastic manual alphabet, hand signs for numbers, and other simple gestures used to communicate during periods when speaking was prohibited, and these are some of the earliest illustrated records of manual communication in special collections. In the seventeenth century, *Chirologia, or the Naturall Language of the Hand* by John Bulwer (1606–1656) focused on a vocabulary of hand gestures, though these were primarily intended for rhetorical use as complements to speech and acting. Juan Pablo Bonet (c. 1573–1633) included a manual alphabet, likely taken from other sources, in his 1620 *Reducción de las letras y arte para enseñar a hablar a los mudos*; however, it was intended to be used as an intermediary communication tool while teaching deaf pupils to speak by demonstrating the movements of the mouth and tongue. This was a common goal for many teachers of deaf pupils, but Frenchman Charles-Michel de l'Épée (1712–1789) recognized that manual signs were already in use in the community and developed a system enhancing and extending them. His signs were intended to serve as a bridge to written language rather than speech, creating greater opportunities for literacy and learning, and his founding of the first public school for the deaf in Paris in the mid-1700s ushered in a 'golden age' of deaf education. A wave of new teachers spread to different parts of the world, with an accompanying proliferation of printed texts. Prior to this, deaf education was often individual and bespoke. Home-made manuscripts, flash cards, or other visual aids might be used for teaching, which may explain the creation of the Fisher's curious new manuscript.

'Alphabet espagnol & françois ou manière de parler avec les doigts à l'espagnole & à la françoise' is undated, but it is estimated to have been created around 1720. It contains beautifully executed grey wash illustrations of the Spanish alphabet signs in Bonet's 1620 volume, in addition to a curious 'French' manual alphabet. The manuscript appears to have been assembled from loose leaves, suggesting they may have originally been drawn together on a larger sheet or perhaps used as flash cards.

The signs in the first part of the manuscript are the same as those in Bonet's volume. Even the visible part of the costume and shading is similar, though in

IMAGE, FACING PAGE: This grey wash drawing of the sign for the letter 'P' in the manuscript is the same as the sign for 'P' in Juan Pablo Bonet's 1620 *Reducción de las letras y arte para enseñar a hablar a los mudos.* **BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT:** The letters G and P in the 'French' signs involve the rest of the body.

G
Je forme en portant la main droite
à l'épaule gauche, et en la faisant
descendre en suivant la ligne ponctée
jusqu'à la maniere où elle paroît placée

the manuscript each sign is given its own page and cartouche frame, while in Bonet's volume some letters are pictured together, and frames in the latter part of the alphabet are less decorative. The second part of the manuscript, titled 'Alphabet françois ou manière de parler avec les doits à la françoise' is significantly more varied. For the vowels, the right finger points in turn to the tips of each of the five left fingers, as with British Sign Language (BSL). It skips several letters that were less common during this time, such as K and W. While many of the other letters of the alphabet appear to be the same as in Italian Sign Language (LIS), there is a group of signs that seem to be of unknown origin. Many of them use movement, and the full body is shown in these illustrations to indicate the direction of the movement. Where did these signs come from? Were they invented by the author?

The G involves a slash of the right hand from the left shoulder down to the right hip. And the P includes a stomping motion of the foot. Some of the unknown signs might have been in local use, could have been taken from an existing alphabet, or might even have been created for this volume to fill in blanks in the author's knowledge. Formerly in the library of collector Mortimer L. Schiff (1877–1931), the manuscript is beautifully bound and cased and in remarkable condition, obviously having been treasured and protected or at least very carefully stored by its former owners. If it was indeed created around 1720, it would predate the period of the wide dissemination of French sign by l'Épée, but not the use of Old French sign (Vieille langue des signes française). This beautiful new manuscript welcomes further analysis which might reveal more about its origins and the complex relationships between its signs, those prior to and contemporary to its creation, and those that came after it.

Liz Ridolfo
Special Collections Projects Librarian
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

Reading Between the Lines: The First Five-Year Plan in Soviet Ukraine

In his political report to the Central Committee at the sixteenth Congress of the All-Union Communist Party in 1929, Stalin outlined that the chief elements of the socialist offensive were to increase the rate of industrialization and the development of state and collective farms, to eliminate capitalist elements in town and country, and to mobilize the masses around socialist construction.[1] The policy of rapid industrialization and collectivization of agriculture during Stalin's first Five-Year Plan from 1928 to 1932 is well documented in the holdings of the Robert S. Kenny Collection at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, with writings by and about Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin as well as works by American and British Marxists and other leftists, some of which include first-hand travel accounts to the Soviet Union during this period. Recently, we have acquired additional material associated with the first Five-Year Plan, with a focus on its implementation in Ukraine. The new acquisitions include a foreign visitor's observations of the results of the plan and publications from the perspective of its implementation, a run of a journal published by the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate (RSI, or Robsel), belletristic-proletarian publications extolling social reforms, and two books for children introducing them to Soviet economic policy.

The travel account *Dojmy z SSSR* ('Impressions from the USSR,' Brno, 1934) by Helena Bochořáková-Dittrichová (1894–1980) includes her impressionistic observations and expressionistic woodcuts describing and illustrating a visit to the Soviet Union in 1934. Helena was born to a middle-class family in Vyškov, Moravia (then a part of Austria-Hungary) and grew up in Haná and Brno. In Brno, she met and married Vladimír Bochořák (1887–1973), a high-school teacher. From 1919 to 1922, Bochořáková-Dittrichová studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague where she graduated with a specialization in graphic arts (the first woman graduate of the Academy). In 1923, she received a scholarship to study printmaking in Paris. There, she encountered and became influenced by the wordless novels (or woodcut novels) pioneered by the Belgian graphic artist Frans Masereel (1889–1972). This discovery led to the publication of *Z mého dětství* ('From My Childhood,' Prague, 1929), which focuses on the day-to-day life of a middle-class girl from childhood into adulthood through a sequence of woodcuts.[2] After completing her studies, Bochořáková-Dittrichová and her husband travelled widely across Europe, to the United States, the Soviet Union, and Asia Minor. Two of their journeys resulted in the publication of travelogues, the following of which were purchased to complement the Fisher Library's holdings on women and travel: *Mezi dvěma oceány: dojmy z cesty po Spojených Státech Amerických* ('Between Two Oceans: Impressions from a Trip to the United States of America,' Prague, 1936), and *Dojmy z SSSR*, in two editions.

The Bochořáks travelled to the United States in 1930–1931. They visited New York, Washington, Boston, and Chicago, and then journeyed across the Rocky Mountains to Utah, California, Arizona, and New Mexico. Helena was struck by the dazzling vertiginous skyscrapers of New York City, describing the vibrant hub of capitalism from up high: 'A modern fairy tale, the city of dollars lies deep, deep below me. I am hypnotized by its beauty, I cannot tear my eyes away, I want to see more and more, I lean over the railing of the roof. An endless sea of houses, a sea of concrete and iron as far as the eye can see.'[3] Three years later, the couple went to the Soviet Union as part of a study tour for Brno teachers organized by the Czechoslovak Teachers' Organization. They visited major cities in the Russian SFSR and Ukrainian SSR, including Leningrad (St. Petersburg), Moscow, Kharkiv, and Kyiv, and got to see agricultural and industrial initiatives rising from the first Five-Year Plan, such as a *kolkhoz*, or collective farm, a metallurgical plant, and the Dnieper Hydroelectric Station in Ukraine. Their itinerary was standard for the time and encompassed visits to government and social institutions, factories, new buildings, and former churches and monasteries turned into museums of atheism. Tour guides from Intourist (a Soviet state-operated travel agency) closely supervised these visits and ensured that local officials enumerated production statistics and touted the benefits of collective work to their foreign guests. Bochořáková-Dittrichová recorded these facts and described the places they visited in *Dojmy z SSSR*. Her impressions in this book are not ideological, neither supportive of, nor opposed to, the Soviet

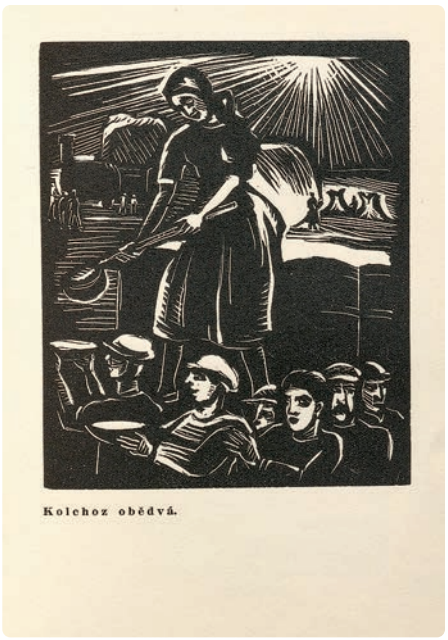
IMAGES, FACING PAGE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Cover of *Mezi dvěma oceány* (1936). Image 2. Cover of *Dojmy z SSSR* (2nd ed, 1934). **BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT:** Illustration from *Сітки, цвяхи, ланцюги* (1932). Kolkhoz lunch from *Dojmy z SSSR* (2nd ed., 1934).

regime. She wrote down and drew what she heard and saw. Yet, in the manner that she collated her observations and conversations, she created sharp contrasts of the social conditions in the Soviet Union, conveying how collectivization and industrialization were replacing nature and displacing historical populations.

For example, Bochořáková-Dittrichová described her visit to the constructivist concrete-and-glass Derzhprom (the State Industry Building), built in Kharkiv between 1926 and 1928. Reminiscent of her time in New York City, she took the elevator to the roof of what was then the first modern skyscraper in the Soviet Union and the largest government building complex in Europe to take in the view of the whole city (Kharkiv served as capital of the Ukrainian SSR from 1919 to 1934). She saw from there 'its factories, parks, and new workers' colonies' as well as its 100,000-seat stadium.[4] Later, while driving around the city and into the countryside, she noticed factory upon factory producing bicycles, threshers, and tractors. She reflected on the expanding city and how 'the new Russian spirit is conquering ever larger areas of the wild steppe. And the steppe is slipping away and away somewhere far away.'[5]

To help celebrate the ever-expanding factories and industrial complexes as observed by Bochořáková-Dittrichová, and the machinery to run them, Soviet writers and artists turned to delivering ideological messages through typographically engaging children's books. One such book is *Сітки, цвяхи, ланцюги* ('Mesh, Nails, Chains') published in Kyiv in 1932. The rhymed text is by Mariia Kudelia (1911–193?), a Ukrainian poet who worked in a knitting factory and composed verse on themes such as highways, tractor drivers, and iron ore, and is supplemented with illustrations by the graphic artist Boris Kriukow (1895–1967). The book presents young readers with textual praises of factory labour and bright illustrations of machinery and tools needed for industry: 'in the first 5-year plan we are building hundreds of new factories and plants and mines and ports. … We are providing new machines: threshers, tractors, and combines. We need them in every branch of the economy. … Wherever you go, wherever you look, you will see them everywhere, they are there: mesh, nails, chains.'[6]

Following a tour of one such factory, Bochořáková-Dittrichová visited a collective farm, established in 1931 in the village Hostomel, just northwest of Kyiv (a director of Intourist prevented an earlier outing to visit a collective farm at Rohan, near Kharkiv), a visit detailed in *Dojmy z SSSR*. On the way there, she observed dilapidated churches and crumbling wooden crosses, sites neglected after the expulsion of their clergy during the first year of the Five-Year Plan. The guide, the farm's accountant, rattled off statistics about the workforce, the farm buildings and fields, and crop yields, indicating, without mention of the two previous years' great famine, that their harvest would be twenty-five percent better this year. When asked how the profit is shared among the workers, the accountant replied, 'Whoever does not work, let him not eat.'[7] Later, when Bochořáková-Dittrichová entered one of the cottages that were a part of the collective, a Ukrainian peasant woman said that she and other villagers no longer used their traditional tiled clay stoves to bake bread. She explained to her guests that 'The ban came, we stopped,' and now they had to travel to Kyiv with bread tickets to buy their rations.[8] The Kolkhoz lunch now consisted of a communally distributed cabbage soup ladled out to each worker.



The RSI, the auditing and industrial management body of Soviet Ukraine, published the journal *Під контроль мас* ('Under the Control of the Masses') in Kharkiv from 1930 to 1931. This body supervised the production and procurement of grain that would result in the *Holodomor*, or famine of 1932–1933, when Soviet authorities forcibly removed grain and foodstuffs from farmers in Ukraine, many of whom had resisted collectivization. An issue from 1931 features on its cover a photograph of farm workers loading sacks of grain, most probably for transport to Russia in the north and east. The first page carries a stark reminder from the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party that party and procurement organizations 'must firmly understand that only that grain can be considered procured that is not stuck in the so-called deep points, but has been transported to station points, grain elevators, and mills.'[9]

To help further visualize the grain procurement and transportation process coordinated by the RSI, we can turn to the pages of another children's book, *Пятілетка* ('Five-Year Plan'), by Boris

IMAGES, LEFT TO RIGHT: Cover of *Під контроль мас* (1931). Illustration from *Пятілетка* (1930).

Sergeevich Evgen'ev (1903–1984) published in Kyiv in 1930. He narrates to the pioneer generation about the changes taking place in their country and how the workers, their fathers and mothers, are building new roads and railways, which in five years will run 'through forests and mountains, past cities and villages' and will transport 'various goods from the city to the village and grain from the village to the city.'[10] The colourful and inventive artwork by Leonid Emilievich Gamburger (1899–1984) depicts seeders, tractors, mowers, and grain depots for growing, harvesting, and storing grain, with one illustration showing machinery arriving to Ukrainian villages and grain-box cars moving from the village to the city.

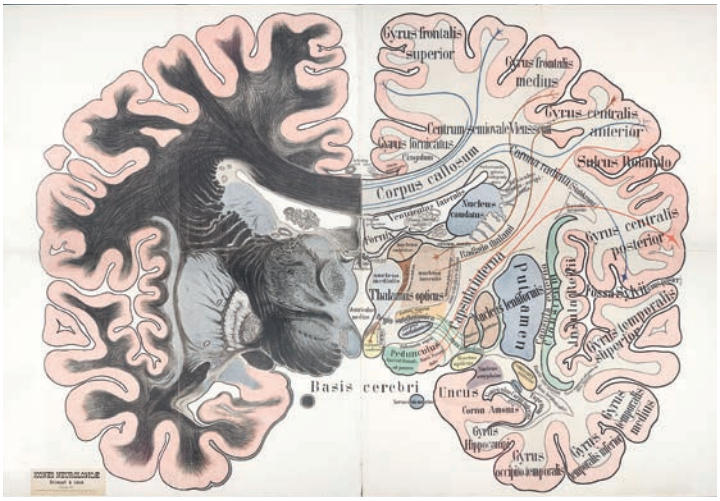
Grain was not the only natural asset of the Ukrainian SSR. The republic accounted for more than half of all coal, cast iron, and iron ore production, and about half of steel output in the All-Union economy. To drive production and strengthen military-industrial potential, the state needed power. In *Dojmy z SSSR*, Bochořáková-Dittrichová describes a subsequent visit to DniproHES (the Dnieper Hydroelectric Station), 'a modern fairy tale of human ingenuity' which, similarly to Derzhprom in Kharkiv, workers constructed quickly in the period from 1927 to 1932 (it became the largest operating hydroelectric power station in Europe).[11] Upon completion the station supplied power to large agricultural and industrial complexes on both sides of the Dnieper River and the cities that rose out of the steppe to support them. The floods that came with the dams erased the presence of a German settlement from the time of Catherine II, 'the waves of the river have covered it.'[12] Bochořáková-Dittrichová narrates how traces of the Zaporozhian Cossacks, for whom the rapids served as protection and the river islands as their fortified camps during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, are past, and 'soon will almost belong to the realm of myth. The Russian presence obliterates the last trace of them.'[13]

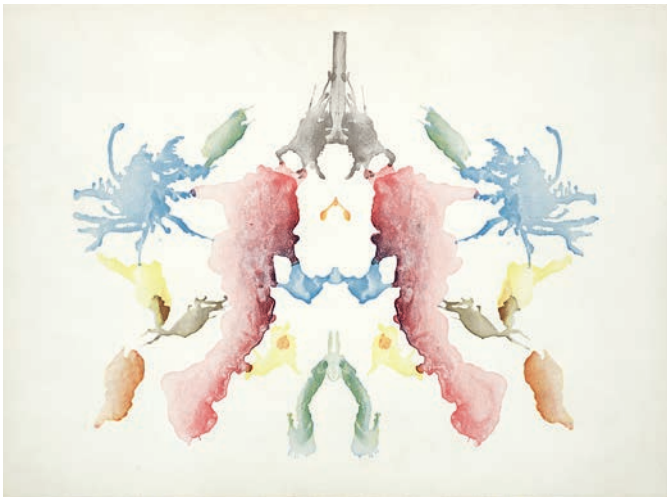
The natural steppe, historical peoples, and the religious and rural way of life in Ukraine were not the only things lost under Russian rule and presence. Even the great industrial monuments of socialist construction erected during the first Five-Year Plan, ones which Bochořáková-Dittrichová described, are gone or in ruins. Retreating Soviet forces blew up DniproHES in 1941. More recently, Russian forces destroyed the Azovstal Iron and Steel Works in Mariupol through heavy shelling, and severely damaged Derzhprom following a missile strike. The recent acquisitions described above offer a historical prism for how to consider the past (and present) battle for Ukraine's resources and how that story gets told.

Ksenya Kiebuzinski
Head, Petro Jacyk Central &
East European Resource Centre

ENDNOTES

1 Joseph Stalin. *Political Report to the Sixteenth Party Congress of the Russian Communist Party* (London: Modern Books, 1930), 94–95.
2 The E. J. Pratt Library at Victoria University holds a copy of this book (call number: VICRARE 000960).
3 Helena Bochořáková-Dittrichová. *Mezi dvěma oceány* (Prague: Nákladem Československé grafické Unie, 1936), 20.
4 Bochořáková-Dittrichová. *Dojmy z SSSR* (Brno: Exod, 1934), 96.
5 Ibid., 102.
6 M. Kudelia. *Sitky, tsviakhy, lantsiuhy* (Kyiv: Bil'shovyk, 1932), 7.
7 *Dojmy z SSSR*, 122.
8 Ibid., 125.
9 *Pid kontroliu mas* (Kharkiv: Komisiia) no. 13–14 (July 1931), 1.
10 Boris Evgen'ev, *Piatiletka* (Kiev: "Kul'tura," 1930), 13.
11 *Dojmy z SSSR*, 129.
12 Ibid., 128.
13 Ibid., 136.





Books on the Brain: How Exhibitions Help Shape Our Collections

The Fisher Library's recent exhibition, *De Cerebro: An Exhibition on the Human Brain*, explored the history of the study of the human brain through printed books, manuscripts, and ephemera. As curator, I was able to draw from the library's extensive collections to tell a story about the human brain. However, the library was also fortunate enough to be able to purchase new material to support the exhibition, including several important titles on brain anatomy, psychiatry, and pharmacology. These recent acquisitions highlight how our ongoing exhibition program fosters the growth of our collections, and how each exhibition leaves its mark on the library and its holdings. Here I introduce some recent purchases made in preparation for *De Cerebro*.

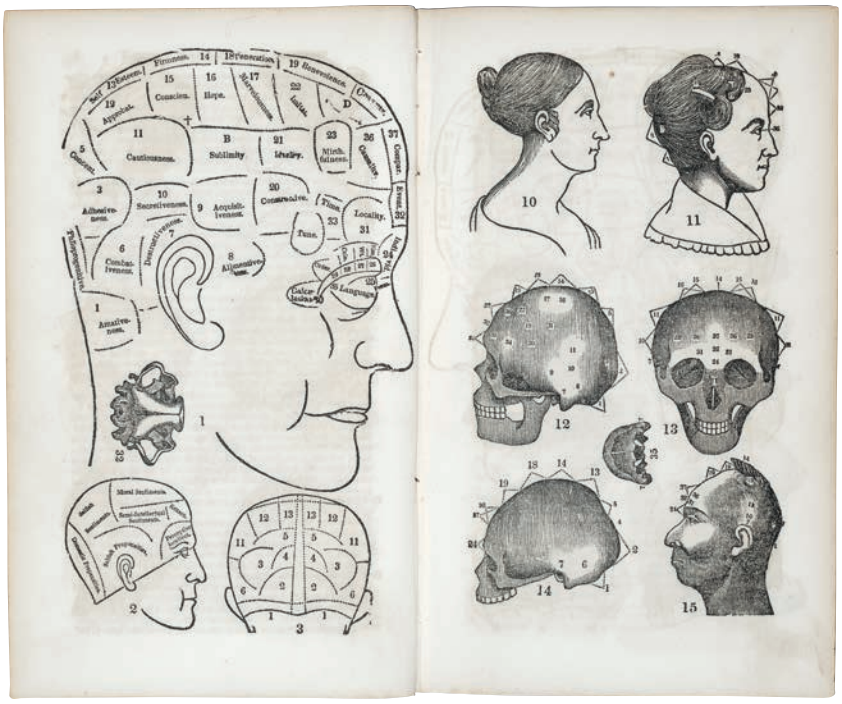
As librarians at the Fisher, we are often asked how we decide what to acquire: a daunting task given the dozens of bookseller's catalogues published each week. The library's mandate is to support research and learning across all disciplines taught at the University of Toronto—as such, we aim to build subject strengths in a wide range of areas. When it comes to new acquisitions, determining what might belong in our collections involves collaboration with colleagues, faculty, students, donors, and antiquarian book dealers who are familiar with and work closely with our holdings. Purchases made for exhibitions must suit the exhibition, but should also hold research value for future library users. The *De Cerebro* exhibition was loosely divided into five sections, each determined by a different perspective on the study of the mind and brain: anatomy, psychiatry, psychology, philosophy, and pharmacology. These sections were intended to highlight the Fisher's strengths in these subject areas while exploring the topic of the brain from multiple disciplinary perspectives. Narrowing the focus of the exhibition to these five areas also made the process of selecting new material for purchase more manageable.

The anatomy sections of the exhibition were well-supported by our existing medical collections, featuring several highlights from the history of medicine such as Andreas Vesalius (1514–1564), Thomas Willis (1621–1675), Raymond Vieussens (1614–1715), and Sir Charles Bell (1774–1842). These display cases showed examples of illustration and printing techniques from wood block printing to copperplate engraving and colour lithography, revealing how illustrations of the human brain became more accurate over time as both human dissection and printing techniques advanced. While the Fisher's collections include hundreds of examples of early woodcut and engraved illustrations, they lacked more modern examples. To include an example of colour lithography, the library purchased a large set of anatomy posters prepared by Adolf von Strümpell (1853–1925), a leading figure in twentieth-century neuroscience in Germany. At over five feet wide, these posters were likely used for teaching, and their large size demonstrates the variety of formats found in historical medical collections.

The section of the exhibition on psychiatry was supplemented by several new acquisitions intended to show how the discipline has evolved over time through print. The Fisher already owned a copy of *A Treatise on Madness* (1758), a foundational text in the history of psychiatry, in which William Battie (1704–1776) argues for the improved treatment of patients in mental institutions. The library also had several editions of the works of Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), including *Die traumdeutung* (*The Interpretation of Dreams*), a text that played a major role in the founding of psychoanalysis. I searched for a modern equivalent to supplement these early works in psychiatry and selected a copy of the first edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-I,* or the *DSM-I,* published by the American Psychiatric Association in 1952. While the fifth edition of the *DSM* is still in use today, the first edition of the manual has

IMAGES, LEFT TO RIGHT: Adolf von Strümpell. *Neurologische Wandtafeln zum Gebrauche beim klinischen, anatomischen und physiologischen Unterricht* (Munich: J. F. Lehmann's Verlag, 1897). Hermann Rorschach. *Psychodiagnostik* (Bern: Hans Huber, 1948).

IMAGES, LEFT TO RIGHT: Orson Squire Fowler. *Fowler's Practical Phrenology* (New York: Fowler & Wells, 1848). N.R. de Mexico. *Marijuana Girl* (New York & Toronto: Stallion Books, 1954).



JOYCE TAYLOR WOULD TRY ANYTHING—IF IT PROMISED A THRILL!
Marijuana Girl
by N. R. de Mexico
SHE FELL PREY TO THE FOULEST OF RACKETS!
An Original Novel
Complete—Unexpurgated
35¢

since been intensely critiqued for its heavy reliance on psychoanalytic theory and the social norms of the 1950s. Like William Battie's *Treatise*, the *DSM-I* is worthy of study in the way it reflects contemporary ideas and attitudes about mental health and how these attitudes have shifted over time. The psychology section of the exhibition provided an opportunity to highlight examples of more ephemeral material that can be used to consider the history of the brain. The Fisher's medical collections held a set of Binet-Simon intelligence tests, issued by the Canadian Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-Establishment in 1919. A precursor to later intelligence tests like the IQ test, the Binet-Simon test is composed of a set of cards with prompts meant to evaluate reasoning, problem solving, and reading comprehension. To complement these cards, the library purchased another well-known psychological test, inkblot cards developed by Swiss psychiatrist Hermann Rorschach (1884–1922) in 1948.

In 2016, the library made the unusual purchase of a collection of phrenological busts. Phrenology, a pseudoscience popular in the late nineteenth century, espoused that the size and shape of an individual's skull could be used to reliably predict certain personality traits and propensities. Phrenology in practice veered far from professional medicine, but its origins are worthy of study in that they represent an attempt to understand the inner workings of the brain. While the library does not typically collect artifacts, the busts were produced and sold alongside guidebooks and other printed matter on phrenological concepts. To highlight the relationship between the busts and printed material in the exhibition, the library acquired several more examples of phrenological texts, including titles by Orson Squire Fowler (1809–1887), perhaps the best known North American phrenologist. These acquisitions also complemented a manuscript by Fowler that was previously donated to the library, which gives the phrenological reading of a young boy in Toronto.

The two final display cases of the exhibition explored differing attitudes toward altered mental states, specifically the kind created by pharmaceuticals, recreational drugs, and hypnosis. Included from our general collections was a copy of *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* by Thomas De Quincey (1785–1859), a classic work of autobiography that explores themes of addiction and self-destruction, as well as a 1950s pulp fiction novel *Marijuana Girl*, which warns against the dangers of cannabis use. To complement these anti-drug titles, the library acquired a copy of a work that explores the potential benefits of the use of psychedelic drugs, *The Varieties of Psychedelic Experience* by Robert E. L. Masters (1927–2008) and Jean Houston (1937–), published in 1966. Purchased at the 2024 Toronto Antiquarian Book Fair from a Toronto-based bookseller specializing in counterculture, *Varieties* provides an alternative perspective on recreational drugs and argues for a more nuanced approach to the use of psychoactive drugs in a therapeutic setting.

The library's collections in the history of medicine, natural history and philosophy hold hundreds of items relevant to the study of the brain. The preparation for *De Cerebro: An Exhibition on the Human Brain* presented an opportunity to both highlight and build on these existing collections. These recent additions—from books, to posters, to ephemera—not only bring new perspectives to debates about the nature of the human brain, but also highlight how exhibitions play a vital role in enriching and shaping the Fisher Library's collections.

Alexandra K. Carter
Science & Medicine Librarian
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

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Names of deceased donors appear in italics. We thank all members who wish to remain anonymous.

One Year in the Library

In the past twelve months, the Fisher Library welcomed over **36,000** visitors who came as individuals or in groups to see the space and exhibitions, attend public events or classes, and consult collections in the reading rooms. This year's active educational and public programming offered library visitors a range of events, free and open to the public, including more than **250** tours, workshops, seminars, lectures, and special events.

6

introductory public tours of the library

6

introductory public workshops on rare books and special collections topics

60

special tours of the library and collections for local individuals and groups, including our popular exhibition tours

8

specialized workshops for local individuals and groups

6

open houses or one-day displays of collections on specific themes, including our annual events for LGBTQ+ pride and Latin America History Month

2

summer seminars on the topics of book science and Black community archives and libraries

45 Over the past year, we held **45** special events for local groups or academic events, from two special performances—'5 Poets Breaking into Song' (May 2024) and a live reading of Chapter five from James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (October 2024)—to our biannual Fisher Small and Fine Press Fair, a display for a neuropathologists conference, and a lecture on International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

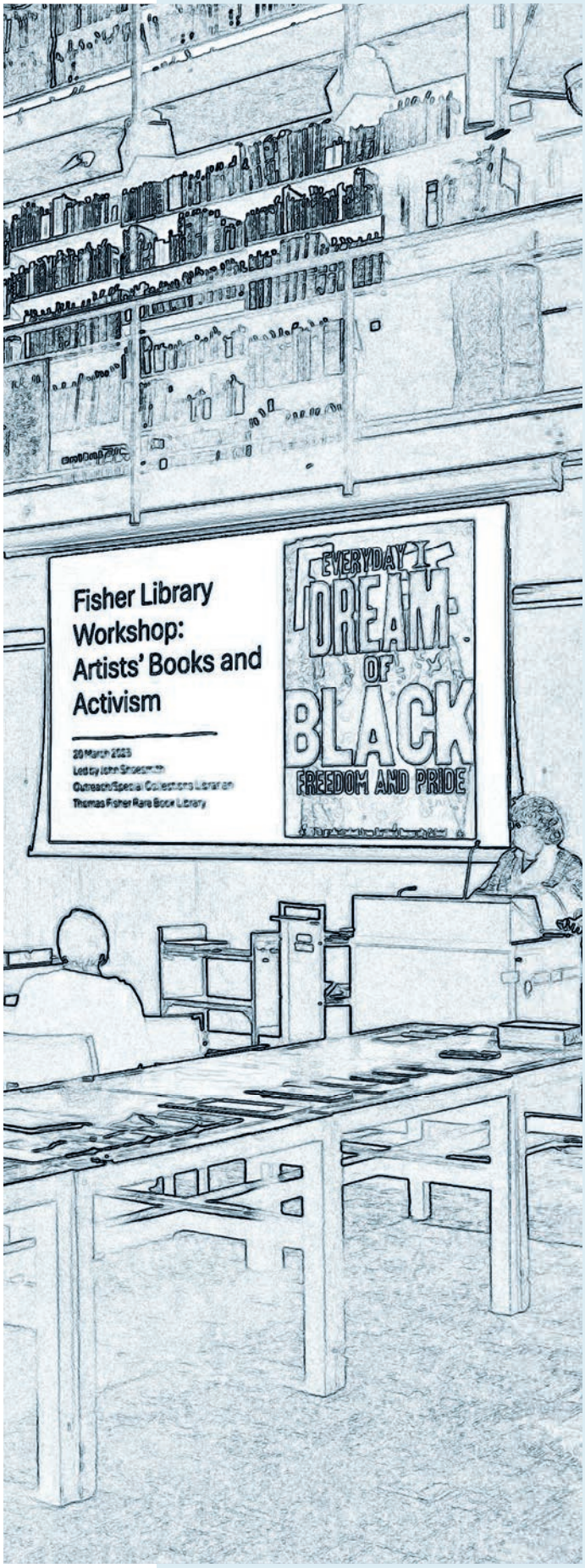
5 Our **5** annual public *Friends of the Fisher Lectures* included the Alexander C. Pathy Lecture by Tamara Walker on 'Philippa Schuyler's Adventures in Black and White'; the J. Edward Chamberlin Lecture by John Borrows on 'Living Treaties in Toronto: Anishinaabe Law and the More-than-Human World'; the George Kiddell Memorial Lecture 'What's Cooking in Guyana? A Conversation about Food Cultures' with Shereen Simic, Althea Brown, and Alissa Trotz; the Johanna and Leon Katz Memorial Lecture by Maurice Vellekoop on '"I'm So Glad We Had This Time Together": A Love/Hate Letter to My Hometown, the City of Toronto'; and the John Seltzer and Mark Seltzer Memorial Lecture by Mark Andrews on 'Engineering a Book Collection.'

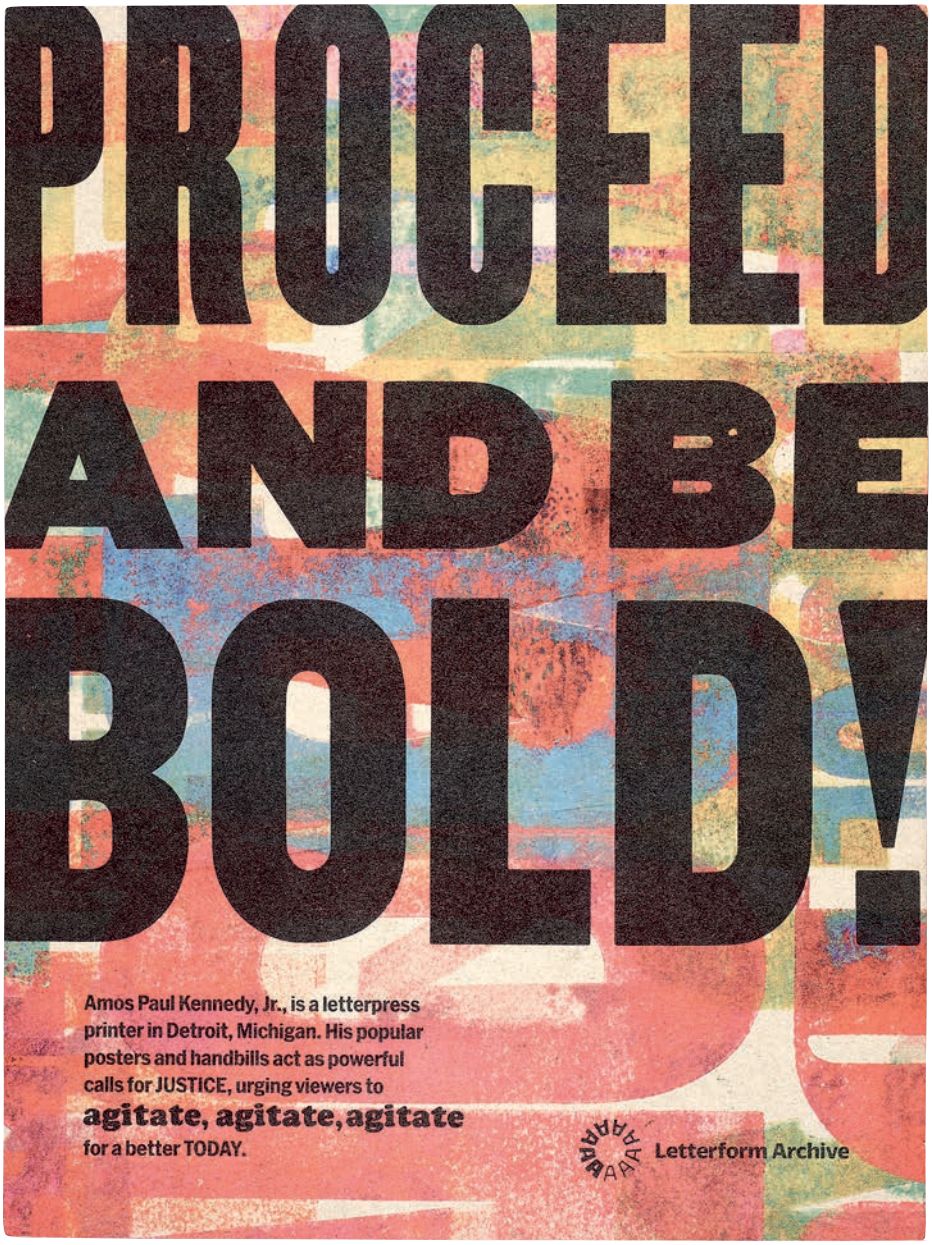
85 The seasons in the library bring new energy to the space with the arrival of new students every semester. The library hosted **85** in-class seminars and workshops on a variety of subjects, ranging from courses learning about rare books and special collections, book history and print cultures, women's studies, history, manuscript studies, theology and religion, science and medicine, and other topics relevant to the collections.

As the seasons transform the St. George campus, the library's exhibition program offers visitors moments of discovery with collections on display. Last summer, visitors and tours learned about the bright mind of Immanuel Kant and his contemporaries in the third philosophy exhibition curated by long-time Friend of the Fisher and book collector, Michael F. Walsh. With the arrival of the fall came the stories of *Women on the Move: An Exhibition of Travel Books*, organized by Ksenya Kiebuzinski, Elizabeth Ridolfo, and David Fernández. In winter, the new year began with *De Cerebro: An Exhibition on the Human Brain* by Alexandra K. Carter. The current exhibition, *Jewish and Muslim Interactions in Books*, organized by Nadav Sharon and Blair Kuntz, will continue through the summer months.

Join us this coming year for another season of public events including a new series of exhibitions, lectures, open houses, workshops, tours, and library events, and encourage your friends to join the *Friends of the Fisher* and enjoy the benefits of belonging to this vibrant community of library supporters.

David Fernández
Head, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections

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Letterform Archive

An Imperfectionist's Guide to Fine Press

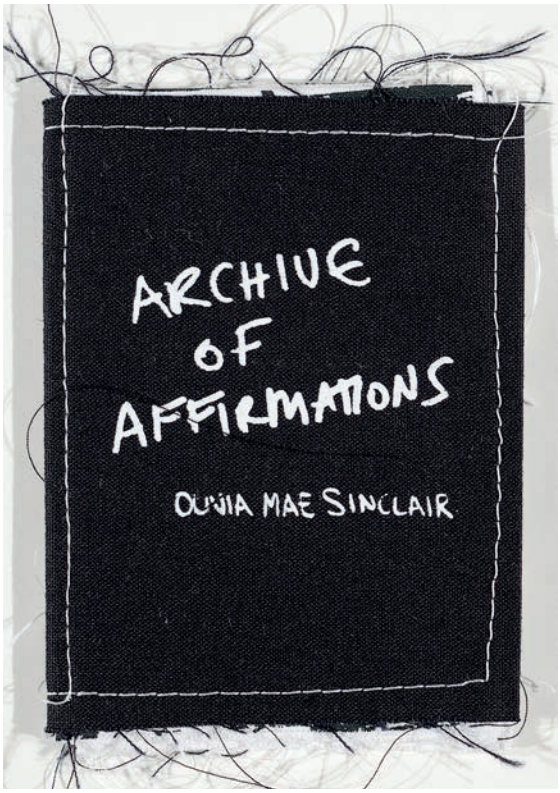
When we talk about small and fine press printing, we tend to be influenced by notions like T. J. Cobden-Sanderson's (1840–1922) 'ideal book or book beautiful.'[1] Founder of the Doves Press, one of the most influential private presses of the early twentieth century, Cobden-Sanderson believed that every element of a book, from typography to binding, should be intentionally and beautifully crafted to form an artistic whole. Granted, anyone who has tried setting type and operating a press soon discovers the process involves a lot of trial and error, from smudged ink to misaligned type. Even for those who may be less familiar with the craft, the value and uniqueness of handmade and hand-printed materials can usually be intuitively sensed. Yet, much of the labour and technical knowledge that goes into making these works often remains concealed.

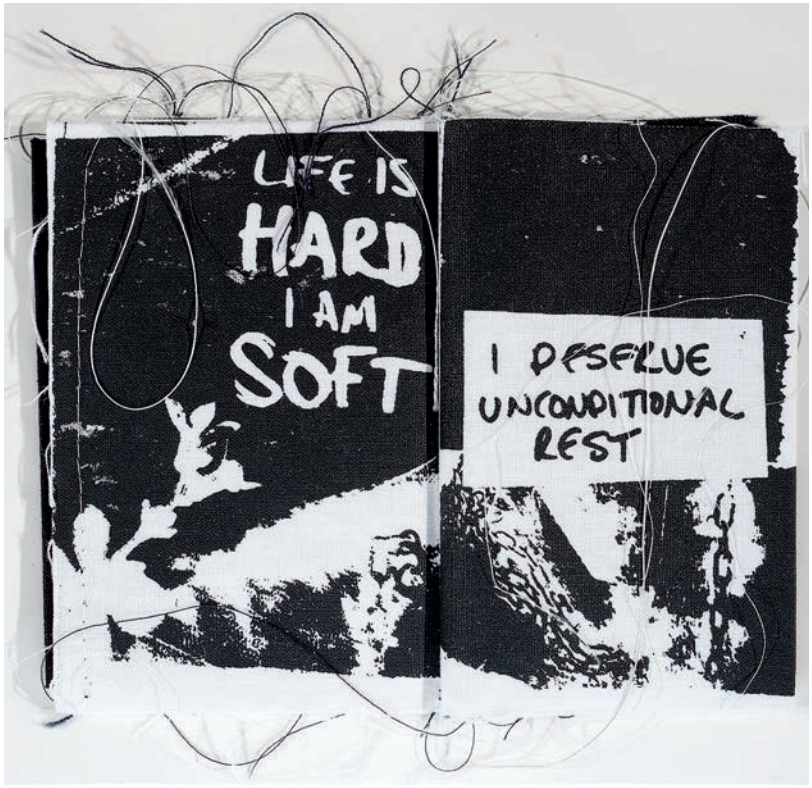
Challenging traditional perceptions of the ideal or perfect copy has become an emerging topic in bookmaking and the field of book history, reflecting a broader shift across many crafts towards embracing imperfection. Consider visible mending practices in textile or ceramic arts, such as *kintsugi*, the Japanese technique of repairing broken pottery with gilded lacquer. Reminiscent of the Japanese philosophy of *wabi-sabi* (finding beauty in imperfection and impermanence), *kintsugi* celebrates flaws as integral to an object's history and aesthetic value. This renewed appreciation for handmade and imperfect objects might be a response to our digital age and consumer habits.

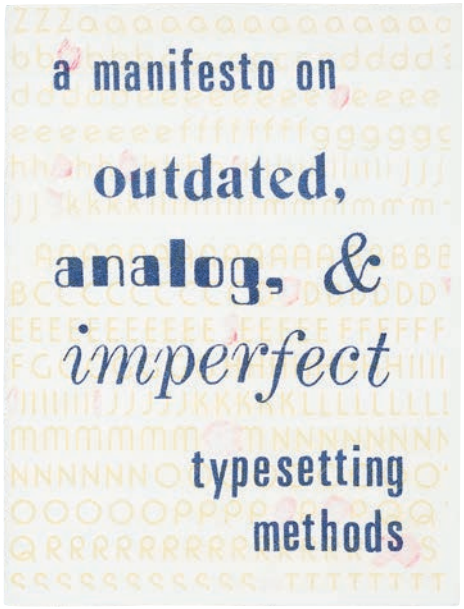
Many of the library's recent acquisitions of handmade and hand-printed materials follow this apparent shift and offer philosophical frameworks that push the boundaries of contemporary printing. Take for example American printer Amos Paul Kennedy's Jr.'s 'School of Bad Printing.' Through his vibrant, colourful, layered, and deliberately messy letterpress posters—featured in his recent exhibition catalogue, *Citizen Printer* (Letterform Archive, 2024)—Kennedy challenges societal ideals of perfection and the uniformity of mass manufacturing. His mission to amplify Black voices in the book arts and spark social and political change is pressing and therefore demands a straightforward approach: just print! Kennedy's ethos pairs well with the work of Toronto-based textile book artist Olivia Mae Sinclair, guided by post-punk and 'sloppy craft' culture.[2] Sinclair's black-and-white fabric books, complete with loose threads, distorted screen-printed illustrations, and handwritten text, explore themes of mental illness and trauma. Like Kennedy's prints, Sinclair's fabric books impart grit, boldness, and urgency.

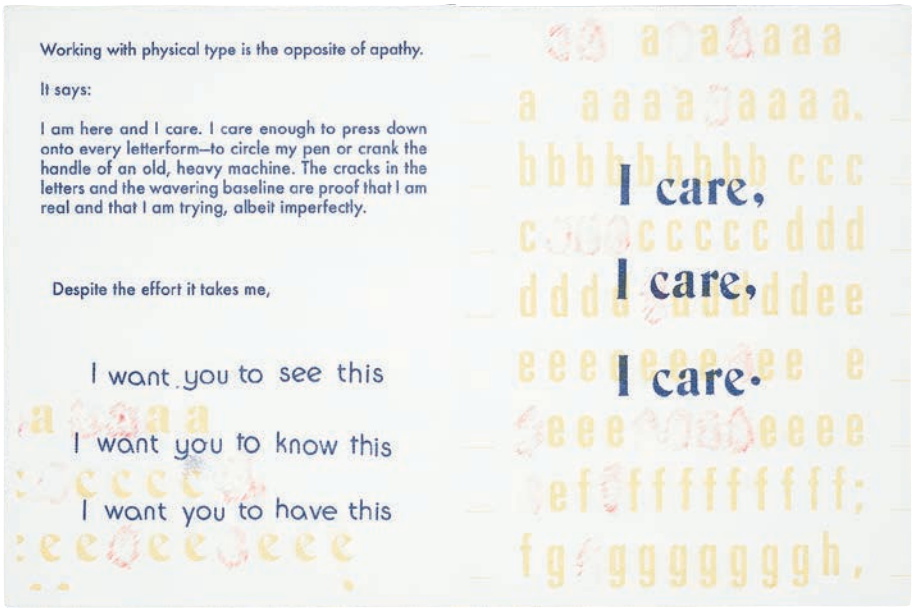
Many incoming zines also showcase the educational value of imperfect printing. In the risograph-printed zine *A Manifesto on Outdated, Analog, & Imperfect Typesetting Methods* (2025), Erin Moore illustrates the care and nostalgia that underscore both Letraset transfers and letterpress printing. As Moore points out, both techniques 'demand that you: work with your hands, work with what you have, take your time & focus, apply pressure, accept flaws.'[3] Zines from Eric Schierloh's small artisanal publishing house Barba de Abejas, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, also provide a fresh perspective and appreciation for the craft, offering strategies to reimagine publishing as an artistic and collective

IMAGE, FACING PAGE: Back cover of Amos Paul Kennedy Jr.'s *Citizen Printer* (San Francisco: Letterform Archive, 2024), which reads 'proceed and be bold!' **BELOW, FIRST ROW:** Olivia Mae Sinclair's *Archive of Affirmations* (Toronto, 2023). **SECOND ROW:** Erin Moore's *A Manifesto on Outdated, Analog, & Imperfect Typesetting Methods* (Philadelphia: bugprints, [2025]).



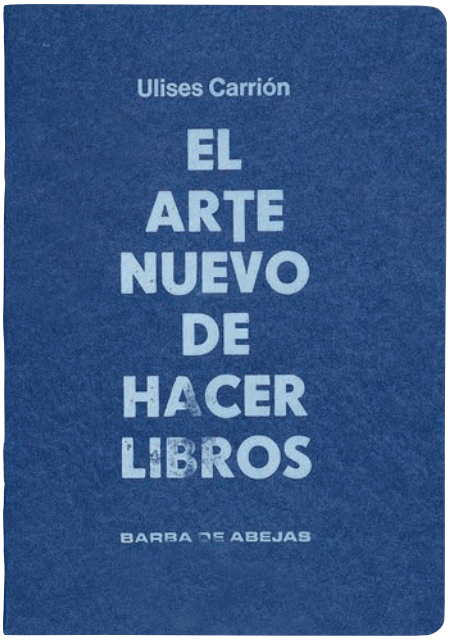





Working with physical type is the opposite of apathy.
It says:
I am here and I care. I care enough to press down onto every letterform—to circle my pen or crank the handle of an old, heavy machine. The cracks in the letters and the wavering baseline are proof that I am real and that I am trying, albeit imperfectly.
Despite the effort it takes me,
I want you to see this
I want you to know this
I want you to have this
I care,
I care,
I care.

practice. In *Print or Die!* (2023) Schierloh proposes a do-it-yourself call to action for home printing, suggesting that the best tools are those that are familiar and accessible. Together, zines such as these remind us that printing can be imperfect and still serve as both a hands-on learning experience and a radical creative act.

Recent publications from Gaspereau Press (Kentville, Nova Scotia) and The Heavy Duty Press (Liberty Township, Wisconsin) also inspire renewed appreciation for the craft, finding beauty even in the daily routines or seemingly mundane tasks of the printshop. In *Slipsheets* (2023), printer Andrew Steeves reflects on the by-products of his bold wood type edition of Gerard Manley Hopkins' *Pied Beauty*



Frontispiece (FRUN-tis-pees) n. The P art which first meets the eye; as: a. Arc h. The principal front of a building. b. A ornamental figure or illustration fro nting the first page, or title Page, of ab ook; formerly, the title-Page itself. c. AForehead. Jocular. d. ThEatEr. ThEFr onto5thEstaGEorscEnEry. Obsolçtç. CamlumWhirkaDruhldurcs, rAqUirck dhackvyczOhust! Whurtlin; Maxwydz YxwvutsRpqonml:kJihG5çdcbaNana s Arç5OrjuGglingmOnkçyswhDthinK 9DdmAdçBaNaNAs5uN5DRJuggLiNg
123,567,890,987,653,212,356,789,698,765,321,235,678,909,876,321,235,678,087,653,212
AUGUSTINE MAXWELL JONES
UNDERSTANDING THIS BOOK
or
ZEN AND THE ART OF METAL TYPE MAINTENANCE
or
LET'S SEE YOUR AI DO THIS
THE HEAVY DUTY PRESS
358,085,321,238,083,212,380,832,123,808,321,238,083,212,380,832,123,808,321,238,083

(Gaspereau Press, 2022), noting how 'every stack of book sheets … also produced a corresponding stack of soiled slipsheets' used to protect the press from ink transfer.[4] The slipsheets proved difficult to part with, as they reflect a meaningful alternative manifestation of the poem, however messy or distorted. In addition to publishing a volume of reproductions of the slipsheets, Steeves decided to gift ten sets of the originals to friends, including the Fisher Library. The original slipsheets are accompanied by an apologia note in which Steeves explains that he decided to give the sheets away as he felt wrong profiting off his printer's waste. In a similar spirit, book artist Michael D. Koppa spontaneously created *Understanding This Book, or Zen and the Art of Metal Type Maintenance* (The Heavy Duty Press, 2023), to confront the tedious task of cleaning his metal type. The result is a bold, colourful, and layered book featuring every individual sort (character) from nine California job cases of Franklin Gothic type. Steeves' slipsheets and Koppa's layered metal type both offer visual representations of the everyday labour and rhythms of their work.

Each of these visual and experimental examples invites us into the printshop, pulling back the curtain on the sensory and material realities of the trade. They are new additions to a long lineage of materials that challenge conventional printing practices or feature errata. Instead of handing us a flawless final product, they

IMAGES, FIRST ROW: Ulises Carrión. *El arte nuevo de hacer libros* (Buenos Aires: Barba de Abejas, 2022). Eric Schierloh. *Print or Die!: manual para la producción hogareña de libros y pequeñas publicaciones* (Buenos Aires: Barba de Abejas, 2023). Felipe Ehrenberg, *La editorial como proyecto artístico* (Buenos Aires: Barba de Abejas, 2023). **SECOND ROW:** Andrew Steeves' original slipsheets, the byproducts of the 2022 Gaspereau Press edition of Gerard Manley Hopkins' poem 'Pied Beauty' with 'Apologia: [Printer's Note]' (2023). Frontispiece and title page of *Understanding This Book, or Zen and the Art of Metal Type Maintenance, or Let's See Your AI Do This* by Augustine Maxwell Jones (pseudonym of book artist Michael D. Koppa) (Liberty Township, WI: The Heavy Duty Press, 2023).

reveal the ink-stained hands of the printer who errs, refines, and presses on. They also make printing feel more tangible and part of the realm of the everyday. As Steeves articulates in an earlier Gaspereau Press publication, *Smoke Proofs* (2014), he feels puzzled when his work is described as extraordinary, because 'a society that elevates basic craftsmanship to a position akin to magic is a society that is functioning, to borrow Wendell Berry's phrase, "outside the sphere of human definition, meaning, and responsibility."'[5] That is to say, putting words and images to paper is a deeply human impulse. Embracing the imperfect and human nature of printing may be key to preserving the craft for future generations. Together, these accounts of contemporary printing extend an empowering invitation to future readers and bookmakers: experiment, try new things, and get your hands dirty—even if imperfectly.

Leora Bromberg
Acquisitions Specialist
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

ENDNOTES

1 T. J. Cobden-Sanderson, *The Ideal Book or Book Beautiful: A Tract on Calligraphy, Printing, and Illustration and on the Book Beautiful as a Whole* (Doves Press, 1900).
2 Olivia Mae Sinclair, *Soft, Sloppy, Stories* (Olivia Mae Sinclair, 2021), 12.
3 Erin Moore, *A Manifesto on Outdated, Analog, & Imperfect Typesetting Methods*, (bugprints, [2025]), fourth unnumbered page.
4 Andrew Steeves and Christopher Patton, *Slipsheets: An Incidental Printing of Gerard Manley Hopkins's "Pied Beauty,"* (Gaspereau Press, 2023), under "Reading the Sheets in the Printer's Trash Bin."
5 Andrew Steeves, *Smoke Proofs: Essays on Literary Publishing, Printing and Typography* (Gaspereau Press, 2014), 15.

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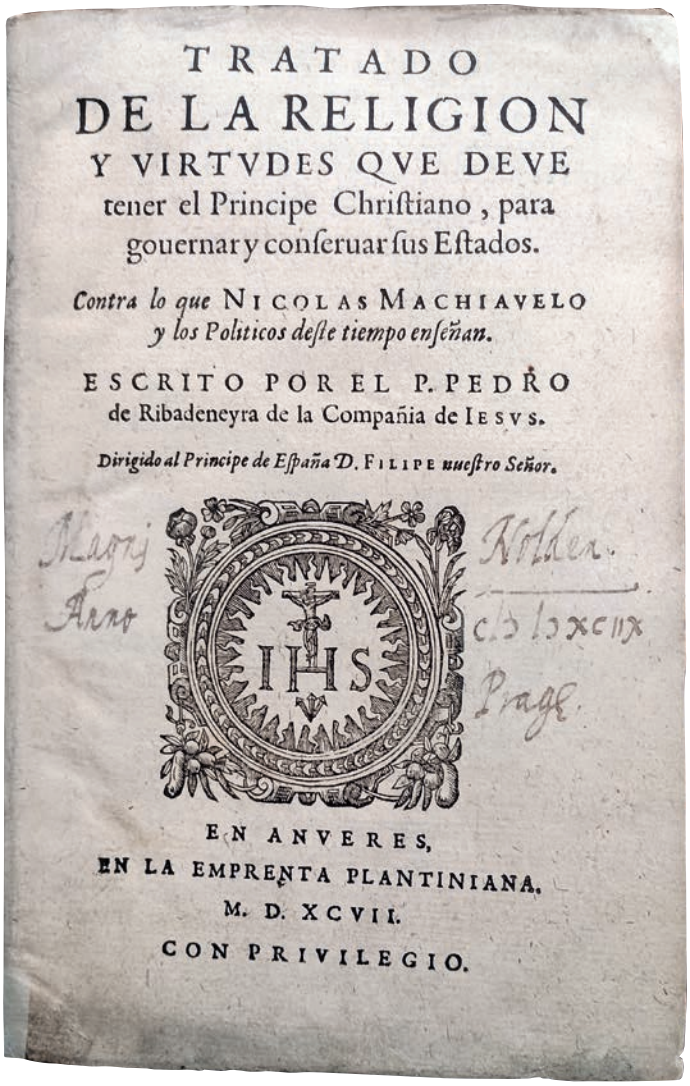
Your contributions will help fund acquisitions and community engagement initiatives, while providing you exclusive access to special publications, lectures, exhibitions, and other events.


TRATADO
DE LA RELIGION
Y VIRTVDES QVE DEVE
tener el Principe Chriſtiano, para
gouernar y conſeruar ſus Eſtados.
Contra lo que NICOLAS MACHIAVELO
y los Politicos deſte tiempo enſeñan.
ESCRITO POR EL P. PEDRO
de Ribadeneyra de la Compañia de IESVS.
Dirigido al Principe de Eſpaña D. FILIPE nueſtro Señor.
IHS
EN ANVERES,
EN LA EMPRENTA PLANTINIANA.
M. D. XCVII.
CON PRIVILEGIO.

Contra Machiavelo: The Original Spanish-Language Anti-Reformation Treatise Written by a Pugnacious Jesuit and Published in Antwerp by the Prestigious Plantin Press

The thesis related to the legitimate use of power proposed in Niccolo Machiavelli's *The Prince* (1532) was anathema to the moral principles sustained by the Church of Rome at the time, principles that stipulated that legitimate authority was intrinsically dependant on the moral and religious rectitude of political leaders. *The Prince* broke away from the long line of Medieval and Renaissance *speculum regum* ('mirror for princes'), a literary genre that generally predicated the legitimacy of authority on the virtue of the rulers, presenting instead a philosophy based on the sheer value of the acquisition and holding of power as the basis of all authority. In a way, Machiavelli joined the long line of reformers that challenged the established Church of Rome, from the meek, like Saint Francis of Assisi, to the hard militants like Jan Hus and John Wycliffe, to mention a few. Against this Reformation wave rose a number of counter-reforming orders from within the established Church, among which were the Capuchins, the previously established Carmelites, and the Jesuits. Of those orders, the Jesuits were originally created by a Basque soldier, Ignatius of Loyola, in 1540 as an elite religious order directly under Pope Paul III. This is the background to the writing and publication of the *Tratado de la religion y virtvdes que deve tener el principe christiano, para gouernar y conseruar sus estados. Contra lo que Nicolas Machiavelo y los politicos deste tiempo enseñan* (Antwerp: Plantiniana, 1597). The author, Pedro de Ribadeneyra (1527–1611), was of a noble Toledan family of Spain. At the age of fourteen, he joined the Jesuits just eight days before the approval of the order by Paul III, and trained at the universities of Paris, Louvain, and Padua, as well as at the new Jesuitic college in Palermo, Sicily, in which he later taught rhetoric. Ribadeneyra held several high posts in the administration of the Jesuit Order and was the writer of Ignatius of Loyola's most complete biography, among many other works.

The *Tratado* consists of three parts. The prologue is addressed to the pious and Christian reader, which sets the tone for the two following books. The first sets the political theory on which a state should be governed, while the second addresses the moral, economic, and political virtues a Christian prince ought to possess. The *Tratado* belongs therefore very much in the long tradition of 'mirror for princes' works. Our libraries already held two early copies of Ribadeneyra's sixteenth-century *Tratado,* not the Spanish-language edition, but a translation into Italian by Scipione Metelli da Castelnuovo di Lunigiana, published in 1598 by the Genoese printer Gioseffo Pauoni. Considering the strength of our collections in support of Renaissance Studies at the University of Toronto, and the most significant characteristics of a treatise written '*contra lo que NICOLAS MACHIAVELO y los politicos deste tiempo enseñan*' by one of the most fervent *milites* of the Jesuit Order and the Counter-Reformation, printed by the Plantin Press, one of the most important printers of the period, we welcome this important work to the University of Toronto Libraries' collections at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library.

Miguel Torrens
Collection Development Department
University of Toronto Libraries

IMAGE: Title page of *Tratado de la religion y virtvdes que deve tener el principe christiano* (Antwerp: Plantiniana, 1597).

But Is That a Book?

It's a classic cliché, to not judge a book by its cover. But what if a book doesn't have a cover? Or even pages? Can it still be called a book? Artists who have worked with the book as a medium for their art have long played with format, often challenging our preconceptions of what a book is. At Fisher, we often show these 'objects' for classes and tours, to get students and visitors thinking beyond the traditional codex as a means to transmit a narrative or explore a theme or idea.

One example I've used on numerous occasions is an object titled *Faux*, created over a decade ago by artist and micropress publisher Ian Phillips in collaboration with Toronto writer Derek McCormack. Released under Phillips' imprint pas de chance, *Faux* is, essentially, a handmade glittery clay snowball encasing a miniature book containing a chapter from McCormack's 2005 non-fiction book *Christmas Days* called 'Fake Snow.' *Faux* is always a source of fascination for those who interact with it—and a source of mild irritation for those who must clean up the tiny snow sparkles always left behind after its use. The 'bookness' of *Faux* can be justified since there is, technically, a book (albeit a tiny one) inside the snowball, but it often leaves viewers with more questions than answers about whether the white globe in their hand can truly be considered a book. It even left us at Fisher with a question: given that we only had one copy of *Faux*, we had no idea whether there was in fact a miniature book inside. We finally got our answer this spring after we acquired two additional copies of it from Phillips and were able to break one of them open. Much to our delight, there was indeed McCormack's charming *Fake Snow* excerpt inside, illustrated by Phillips—and thankfully no extra snow sprinkles to tidy up. (You can view the video of us breaking it on our Instagram page.) Over the past year, we've added more artists' books to our collection that challenge the idea of what we can call a book.

Gino Romero describes themselves as an artist whose practice 'explores the ideas of memory and value as they relate to the larger structures that formed traditions of mourning and veneration.' They use object and performance as their primary media to confront and actuate these traditions. Two of their works are recent additions to the Fisher. In 2020, Romero created a one-off book titled *Cuánto vale? Cuánto cuesta?* ('How Much Is It? How Much Does It Cost?'). Rather than traditional paper, Romero instead used the Venezuelan currency, Bolívares, which they bound to create the nineteen-page pamphlet. The bills were not just any currency: they were what their parents brought with them from Venezuela when they emigrated to Miami. As the currency had reached a level of inflation in Venezuela that made it practically worthless as legal tender, the book's format became a direct comment on the deteriorating economic situation in the country. Deploying a typewriter, they added minimalist text typed directly on the currency, such as 'What is the money worth if it can't buy food? water? medicine?'

Also in 2020, Romero produced the book *I Couldn't Afford Flowers, So I Made These Instead*. Again made using bills brought by their parents, and with a dedication to their aunt and uncle who died in the Venezuelan humanitarian crisis, it is an even more direct and overtly political statement. Romero has manipulated the bills via origami to create a flower sitting on a base, with text on the petals—and again using a typewriter—holding simple but provocative statements about the deteriorating state of the economy and the lack of value of the currency such as 'money couldn't buy us what we needed most' or 'money couldn't buy the documents she needed to come live with us.' It's a small sculptural object that Romero themselves insists is a 'book' in their artist's statement, writing 'This book contextualizes grief within the political circumstances that caused it.' By playing with the form,

IMAGE, OPENING PAGE: Intact copy of Ian Phillips and Derek McCormack's *Faux* (2005). **BELOW, FIRST ROW:** Copy of *Faux* broken open revealing the booklet inside. Film canister and postcards of Leopoldo Bloom's memoir *How to Transition on Sixty-Three Cents a Day* (2013). **SECOND ROW:** Gino Romero's *Cuánto vale? Cuánto cuesta?* (2020). Gino Romero's *I Couldn't Afford Flowers, So I Made These Instead* (2020), made from Venezuelan currency.

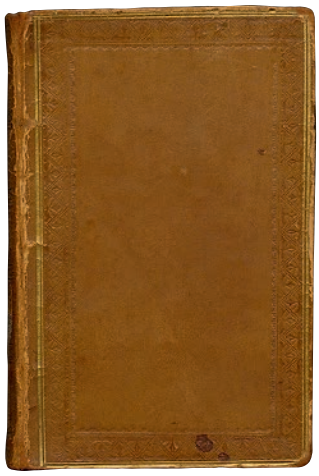
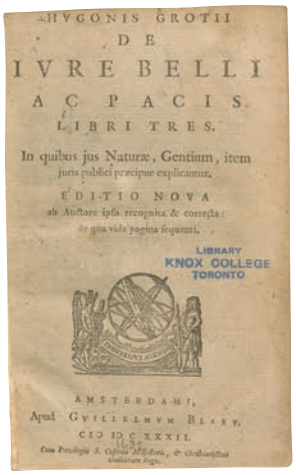
Romero has made the emotional impact stronger than what could be conveyed in a more traditional book format.

Similarly, writer and artist Leopoldo Bloom has played with form in his memoir *How to Transition on Sixty-Three Cents a Day*. Bloom uses thirty-one separate postcards, which he's enclosed in a 35mm film canister, to chronicle his cross-country migration in the early 2000s to access transgender health care. As Bloom has explained it, the form is deliberate: creating an unbound book of postcards challenges the practice of placing queer experiences in traditional narrative mediums. The postcards are letterpress printed recreations of the missives written by Bloom to his mother, and detail many of the struggles he was dealing with while transitioning. 'Dear Mom,' he writes in a card from Portland, Oregon. 'I'm still traveling on that train of social ambiguity. I can't wait till I get to invisibility. I'm so tired of wearing my transness on my sleeve. If I knew how long this trip would take I would have started testosterone sooner.' Another card ends with Bloom cursing his fortune to be born in the wrong body: 'I resent other artists who came in the right packaging and didn't have to lose so much timing cleaning up God's mistake.'

The form of *How to Transition* dictates how best to interact with the object. I've used it in a number of classes and tours since its purchase last fall, and in my experience, the way to use it most effectively is to have users take the postcards from the canister and individually read them aloud to the group. There is no starting point to when the story begins: the cards are not in any set order, nor do they carry dates. The text of most of the postcards is a simple story of life on the road. When read as a whole, much like chapters in a book, Bloom's story—and his struggle—becomes acute. This unconventionality adds to the power and poignancy of the narrative.

While sometimes presenting a challenge to readers, these books-as-objects are reminders that not all stories need to be told within the confines of a traditional form. In fact, the form itself often provides an artist or writer with an additional tool to better express the narrative and the message.

John Shoesmith
Outreach Librarian
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

Volumes Held at Fisher Featured in Global Legal Census

Two volumes held at the Fisher Library will now be included in a newly published international legal history census. Hugo Grotius' (1583–1645) seminal work *On the Rights of War and Peace* (*De iure belli ac pacis*, henceforth IBP) is widely regarded as having laid the foundations of modern international law. The Heisenberg Project at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law in Heidelberg, titled 'The Unseen History of International Law: A Census Bibliography of Hugo Grotius's *De iure belli ac pacis*' explores this legacy by systematically examining all surviving copies of the first nine editions of IBP from 1625 to 1650. Published as a detailed census bibliography by Oxford University Press in May 2025[1]—marking the four-hundredth anniversary of the work's original 1625 edition—the project reveals a previously uncharted dimension of international legal history. By cataloguing annotations from statesmen, diplomats, and scholars over four centuries, the project uncovers a rich record of IBP's reception and influence, shedding new light on the dissemination, interpretation, and adaptation of international legal thought across time and geography.

Integrating findings from legal scholars, such as those of the Heisenberg Project, deepens our understanding of IBP's role in shaping international law, and situates it within the broader traditions of legal historiography and book history. The dynamic between continuity and change in legal thought highlights how historical legal texts inform both the evolution of legal institutions and contemporary debates. Grounded in book history, the Grotius census examines the printing history of the nine editions through authorial correspondence, printer interactions, and typographical variations. This foundation enabled us to develop a systematic method for consulting each edition.

The Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library holds two copies of IBP for our research period: a 1631 edition[2] and a 1632 Blaeu edition.[3] The most likely former owner of the 1631 IBP is Diego Parada y Bustos de Vidaurre de Orduña (1763–1831), who lectured at the University of Alcalá and served as royal advisor to the Crown of Spain. It was donated by Michael Walsh, whose philosophy collection at the Fisher Library includes thousands of other works. The 1632 edition was donated by Mrs. Alexander Steele in 1920, highlighting the role of women in the movement of IBP copies. It is on deposit at the Fisher collection from Knox College, a postgraduate theological branch of the University of Toronto founded in 1844. When consulted during a November 2022 visit, both revealed features significant to the broader census—such as the 1631's extended errata (not present in all copies) and the 1632 Blaeu edition's provenance—underscoring the global scope of the holdings of the Thomas Fisher Library. Fisher's early modern acquisitions, including Spanish owner's copies that found their way to Toronto, merit close, in-person study.

Matthew Cleary
Max Planck Institute

IMAGES, LEFT TO RIGHT: The 1631 Walsh copy in original limp vellum binding with remains of ties has 'hug. grotio jure belli' inked on the spine, and a title page inscription likely by Diego Parada y Bustos de Vidaurre de Orduña. 1631 IBP (III/6). The 1632 Blaeu edition, in panelled brown leather with decorative blind-tooled margins and ornamental patterns. 1632 Blaeu edition (V/7)

ENDNOTES

1 Mark Somos, Matthew Cleary, Pablo Dufour, Edward Jones Corredera, and Emanuele Salerno, *The Unseen History of International Law: A Census Bibliography of Hugo Grotius' De iure belli ac pacis* (1625– 1650 Editions) (Oxford University Press, 2025).
2 Call Number: Walsh 00493. In our census this copy has been signified with the following identification: III/6.
3 Call Number: Knox 00063, on deposit. V/7.

Exhibitions & Events 2025

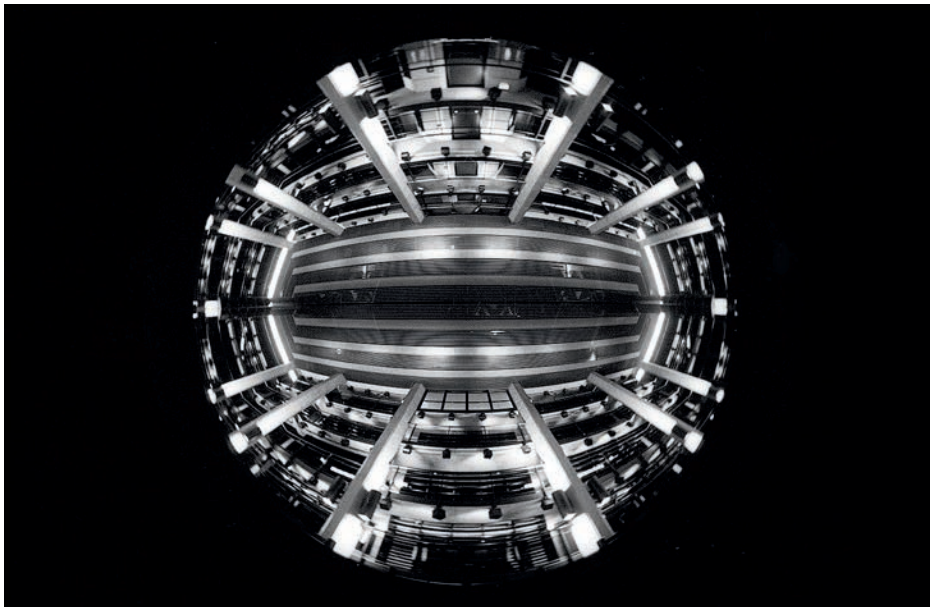
EXHIBITIONS

Exhibition Location and Hours
9–5, Monday–Friday
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library
120 St. George Street, Toronto, Ontario
Before visiting, please check our website to confirm hours of opening.

20 May to 8 August 2025

Jewish-Muslim Interactions in Books in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods

In recent generations, there is a tendency to view and define relations between Jews and Muslims through the lens of 20TH-21ST century political conflicts. Yet, the peoples that adhere to these two monotheistic religions have interacted in multifaceted—often much more positive—ways through the ages. The purpose of this exhibition is to highlight these relations, some of which had profound impacts on modern-Western culture more generally, through the holdings of the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library. *Jewish-Muslim Interactions* is curated by Jewish Studies Librarian, Nadav Sharon, and retired Near and Middle Eastern Studies Librarian, Blair Kuntz.



Summer 2025

70 Rare Books, Special Collections, Archives

Established in 1955, the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections is the unit responsible for providing library services and public access to the largest holdings of rare books and special collections in Canada. This anniversary exhibition features a selection of seventy items recently used in research, teaching, and learning at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library. The exhibition and catalogue are inspired by moments of discovery and creativity in the seminar room, reference desk, and reading room.

EVENTS 2025 TO BE ANNOUNCED

Events, Friends of Fisher Lectures, Open Houses, Seminars, and Workshops

Please visit the News & Events section of our website and our social media channels for information.
fisher.library.utoronto.ca

August Closure! Please note that the Fisher Library will be closed Monday 18 August–Monday 2 September. Regular hours resume Tuesday 3 September.

EDITORS' NOTE

The Halcyon: The Newsletter of the Friends of The Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library is published twice a year in June and December. *The Halcyon* includes short articles on recent noteworthy gifts to and acquisitions of the library, recent or current exhibitions in the library, activities of the Friends, and other short articles about the library's collections.

This issue was edited by Grant Hurley, Liz Ridolfo, Loryl MacDonald, and Maureen Morin, and designed by Maureen Morin.

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Members of the editorial board of *The Halcyon* are David Fernández, Grant Hurley, Loryl MacDonald, and Liz Ridolfo, Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, and Mimosa Kabir Ketley and Maureen Morin, University of Toronto Libraries.

Photography by Paul Armstrong, David Fernández, Thomas Guignard, Grant Hurley, Maureen Morin, Liz Ridolfo, and Paul Terefenko.

THE HALCYON

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Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A5